

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as shown. Applicants reserve the right to pursue any of the original claims presented in this application at a later date.

1. (currently amended) A method of applying a zirconia-based porous thermal barrier coating, the method comprising:

~~selecting a composite powder comprising a mostly unbound homogeneous mixture of a first constituent comprising stabilized zirconia particles and;~~

selecting a second constituent comprising particles of a ceramic material having a melting temperature sufficiently low so that the second constituent particles at least partially melt when applied with a low velocity oxygen fuel process;

mixing the first and second constituents together to form a homogenous mixture of composite powder; and

spraying the composite powder using the low velocity oxygen fuel process to apply the composite powder and apply as the porous thermal barrier coating to a surface.

2. (currently amended) The method of claim + 27, further comprising selecting the second constituent to comprise particles of calcium titanate.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim + 27, further comprising selecting the second constituent to comprise particles of strontium titanate.

4. (currently amended) The method of claim + 27, further comprising selecting the second constituent to comprise particles of sodium-zirconium-phosphate-silicate.

5. (currently amended) A method of applying a zirconia-based porous thermal barrier coating, the method comprising:

selecting a composite powder comprising a homogeneous mixture of a first constituent comprising zirconia particles and a second constituent comprising particles of a ceramic material having a melting temperature sufficiently low so that the second constituent particles at least partially melt when applied with a low velocity oxygen fuel process, ~~most of the first and second~~

constituents being ~~freely flowing relative to each other within~~ mixed to form the homogenous mixture; and

using the low velocity oxygen fuel process to apply the composite powder to a surface;

further comprising applying the composite powder and the porous thermal barrier coating to the surface of a component without removing the component from a machine of which it forms a part.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim + 27, further comprising selecting the second constituent to comprise at least 20% by volume of the composite powder.

7. (original) The method of claim 6, further comprising selecting the second constituent to comprise from 20-40% by volume of the composite powder.

8. (currently amended) The method of claim + 27, further comprising selecting the second constituent to comprise a material exhibiting a coefficient of thermal expansion within 30% of that of the first constituent.

9. (currently amended) The method of claim + 27, further comprising selecting the second constituent particles to comprise a material exhibiting a coefficient of thermal expansion within 20% of that of the first constituent particles.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim + 27, further comprising selecting the second constituent particles to comprise a material exhibiting a coefficient of thermal expansion within 10% of that of the first constituent particles.

11. (currently amended) The method of claim + 27, further comprising selecting the second constituent particles to comprise a material exhibiting a thermal conductivity of no more than 20% higher than that of the first constituent particles.

12. (currently amended) The method of claim 4 27, further comprising selecting the second constituent particles to comprise a material exhibiting a thermal conductivity of less than that of the first constituent particles.

13. (currently amended) A method of repairing a zirconia-based porous thermal barrier coating, the method comprising:

selecting a composite powder comprising ~~an unbound~~ a homogeneous mixture mixed by ball milling ~~or wet chemical mixing~~ of a first constituent comprising zirconia particles and a second constituent comprising particles of a ceramic material having a melting temperature sufficiently low so that the second constituent particles at least partially melt when applied with a low velocity oxygen fuel process;

providing access to a damaged region of a zirconia-based coating on a component of a machine;

cleaning the damaged region; and

using the low velocity oxygen fuel process to apply the composite powder and the porous thermal barrier coating to the damaged region without removing the component from the machine.

14. (original) The method of claim 13, further comprising selecting the second constituent to comprise particles of calcium titanate.

15. (original) The method of claim 13, further comprising selecting the second constituent to comprise particles of strontium titanate.

16. (original) The method of claim 13, further comprising selecting the second constituent to comprise particles of sodium-zirconium-phosphate-silicate.

17. (original) The method of claim 13, further comprising selecting the second constituent to comprise a material exhibiting a coefficient of thermal expansion within 30% of that of the first constituent.

18. (original) The method of claim 13, further comprising selecting the second constituent particles to comprise a material exhibiting a coefficient of thermal expansion within 20% of that of the first constituent particles.

19. (original) The method of claim 13, further comprising selecting the second constituent particles to comprise a material exhibiting a coefficient of thermal expansion within 10% of that of the first constituent particles.

20. (original) The method of claim 13, further comprising selecting the second constituent particles to comprise a material exhibiting a thermal conductivity of no more than 20% higher than that of the first constituent particles.

21. (original) The method of claim 13, further comprising selecting the second constituent particles to comprise a material exhibiting a thermal conductivity of less than that of the first constituent particles.

22. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~ 27, wherein the composite powder is applied to the surface of a component without removing the component from a machine.

23. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~ 27, wherein the thermal barrier coating has a void percentage in the range of 20-25%.

24. (canceled)

25-26. (canceled)

27. (currently amended) A method of applying a zirconia-based porous thermal barrier coating, the method comprising:
selecting a first constituent comprising zirconia particles;

selecting a second constituent comprising particles of a ceramic material having a melting temperature sufficiently low so that the second constituent particles at least partially melt when applied with a low velocity oxygen fuel process;

mixing the first constituent and the second constituent to form a homogeneous composite powder mixture ~~without fusing the first and second constituents into hollow structures; and~~

using the low velocity oxygen fuel process to spray the homogenous composite powder mixture such that the second constituent ~~at least partially~~ encases the first constituent when the porous thermal barrier coating is applied to a surface.